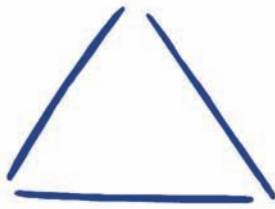


Doughty Centre



Corporate Responsibility

*Cranfield*  
UNIVERSITY  
School of Management



## Embedding Corporate Responsibility in the MBA Curriculum

by  
Chris Marsden OBE

September 2008

# **EMBEDDING CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY IN THE MBA CURRICULUM**

**Chris Marsden OBE**

## **FOREWORD – DAVID GRAYSON CBE**

Businesses around the world are struggling to embed Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability. Management and business schools face similar challenges. For most schools, the MBA programme has become one of their core offerings. How far Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability is integrated through the MBA becomes an indicator of progress on broader embedding. Indeed, the biennial "Beyond Grey Pinstripes"<sup>1</sup> rankings of business schools internationally, focuses particularly on the MBA for this reason.

At Cranfield there has been an openness to explore how to introduce Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability and a willingness to experiment<sup>2</sup>. Some of the proactive steps we are taking are described on the Cranfield website .

Like many other schools, however, we also face competing pressures on the timetable; lively debates on whether CR yet has robust enough research, underpinning theory and an agreed corpus of knowledge; and how to make it interesting and relevant to students from across the world, who come from many different cultures, political systems and varieties of capitalism.

We certainly have not yet found the answers! We know from participating in some of the many networks which now exist to encourage more research and teaching of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability, such as the European Academy for Business in Society (EABIS),<sup>3</sup> Global Responsible Leadership Institute<sup>4</sup>, the Aspen Institute's Centre for Business Education curriculum development initiative<sup>5</sup>, Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship's Global Education and Research Network<sup>6</sup>, and the UN Global Compact's Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME)<sup>7</sup>, that colleagues around the world are grappling with similar issues.

As the Financial Times management writer, Morgen Witzel told the Doughty Centre this summer:

"As a historian of management, I have seen too many very good, even brilliant ideas wither on the vine because few people in management have the courage to take them up. My fear is that sustainability will be the next case of this phenomenon. But it does seem that this might be one area where business schools can not only help make the case, but can add value for, and to, graduates who take the sustainability message to heart."

Chris Marsden is a teacher and reflective practitioner of CR of many years' standing. Chris and I first started to debate the issues of how to get CR into business schools, when we organised a weekend seminar on the topic, at the BP Management Centre back in November 1995. Chris subsequently set up the

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.beyondgreypinstripes.org>

<sup>2</sup> [www.som.cranfield.ac.uk/som/mba/choose/corporateresponsibility.asp](http://www.som.cranfield.ac.uk/som/mba/choose/corporateresponsibility.asp)

<sup>3</sup> [www.eabis.org](http://www.eabis.org)

<sup>4</sup> [www.grli.org](http://www.grli.org)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.aspenccbe.org>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.bcccc.net/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&PageID=1776>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.unprme.org>

Centre for Corporate Citizenship at Warwick University on secondment from BP. He continues to teach well-received classes in CR and ethics at several business schools – including now at Cranfield. He has been an enthusiastic supporter of EABIS since its inception. Chris has been a visiting fellow and wise counsellor at the Doughty Centre since we began. At the outset of the Doughty Centre, we asked Chris to look at how to integrate CR into the MBA curriculum. His original report in June 2007 has been our road-map ever since.

Knowing though the continuing debate which Cranfield and many other schools face, we decided to share an abridged version of the original Chris Marsden paper with a wider audience. The paper focuses on the formal curriculum. There are, of course, a range of further ways that CR can be incorporated into the MBA experience, such as through:

- student projects,
- supporting a student-led Net Impact or equivalent group,
- incorporating CR into students' international study visits,
- and by running a CR network where faculty, students and alumni can listen to speakers, discuss new research and debate the issues.

We are trying to do all this at Cranfield.

We are publishing this paper in a spirit of honest inquiry, and in order to contribute to an "open source" development of ideas. To repeat – we don't have all the answers. Others are much further down the road. We have not "cracked it" at Cranfield – but like many other institutions, we know we have to. As with all our Centre publications, we welcome feedback – and we hope it spurs debate – and action!

David Grayson – Director

The Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility – September 2008

## **EMBEDDING CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY IN THE MBA CURRICULUM**

**- CHRIS MARSDEN**

### **Background**

In April 2007 the author was commissioned by the Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility at Cranfield University to survey the content of Cranfield's core MBA curriculum to establish where corporate responsibility concepts and issues were either already being covered to some degree or had strong relevance and could be applied if there was a will to do so. The survey showed that a significant number of corporate responsibility issues are already addressed in some courses. Many courses present several opportunities to raise such issues. All the courses have some relevance to corporate responsibility. The outcome of this survey is currently informing the development of corporate responsibility teaching at Cranfield. The purpose of this paper is to share the generic findings of this work in the hope that it will make a constructive contribution to the debate about how best to include corporate responsibility in the MBA curriculum.

## **Introduction**

The teaching of the role of Business in Society, Business and Sustainability, or Corporate (Social) Responsibility (C{S}R) as it is popularly known, in MBA programmes is still in its early stages. Where it happens it is most commonly found in an elective with, until recently, less than half the student cohort opting for it. There are a few compulsory modules, like the one the author teaches for the International Management School of the Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées (ENPC) in Paris and other venues. There are also a few specialist Masters programmes, for instance at Bath and Nottingham Universities.

The case for including CSR in the mainstream MBA curriculum is growing. Student demand seems to be increasing. CSR issues are impacting on more and more companies and future managers need to be aware of them and to be introduced to effective ways of managing them. There are clear opportunities for companies to develop new and profitable ways of doing business in a more sustainable way. There are also threats that as more companies are publicly exposed for serious CSR failings, the blame is likely in part to be levelled at business schools for not preparing their students properly. So it is timely to ask how best this should be accommodated in an already overcrowded MBA curriculum.

CSR is about the purpose of companies; what companies individually and collectively contribute to life in a community, a country and even life on Earth. CSR is closely associated with the idea of 'sustainability'. It is about the interdependence between a company and its economic, social and ecological environment. It is about how that interdependency can be managed for the better performance of a company and society as a whole. The concept of CSR is now widely recognised as a way of doing business. It is integral to all mainstream business decision-making. Those companies which have adopted CSR principles and practices, no longer regard them as an optional bolt-on but have built them into all aspects of the business. Leading CSR professionals in companies no longer 'do CSR' for the company but, working with everyone from the Main Board downwards, act as advisers on how CSR principles can be applied at every stage of the business and help to monitor the company's CSR performance.

It seems axiomatic, therefore, that any teaching programme of contemporary business know-how needs to be infused with CSR thinking. The only practical way to do this in the short term may be to provide an elective module with a few special 'CSR events' for the whole student cohort to get them thinking about the main issues. But in the longer term should the plan be to add a CSR module to the compulsory core as soon as the need for it becomes fully recognised – as yet another subject in its own right? For MBA programmes relying on visiting faculty, such as ENPC, this may be the only way. But for those with a full quota of resident faculty there may be another way. As suggested above, CSR in many leading companies is no longer a separate add-on but is becoming part of mainstream business, integral to all decision-making. Could not CSR, therefore, also be taught as an integral part of existing MBA modules, such as strategic management, human resources, marketing, accounting and economics?

This may present a challenge to many existing MBA teaching faculty and some traditional subject approaches. For instance, many modules are already over-subscribed. Faculty have limited knowledge of CSR. The newness and under-researched nature of the CSR concept and its practice within business reinforces academic scepticism. Academic rewards focus on specialism, not on engaging in cross curriculum themes. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to explore ways

through some of these challenges. This will be done, firstly, by outlining what a typical CSR curriculum might comprise. Secondly, examples of CSR application to a number of mainstream MBA subjects will be given. Finally, there is a brief discussion on how CSR might be taught successfully across the MBA curriculum, reflecting how it is now being successfully managed in some of our leading companies. It is hoped that familiarity with many of the ideas and issues listed will help MBA teachers to realise that they are already touching on many of these within their existing specialisms and encourage them, with appropriate help (e.g. a 'training the trainers' programme), to embrace them more fully. It is also hoped that interested MBA students, once they are aware of how CSR issues relate to their existing core modules, will ensure their discussion at appropriate times in the different courses by raising the issues through questions in class.

## **The CSR Curriculum**

There is no widely recognised CSR curriculum but the following comprise the main themes that most would probably agree should be included.

### **1. Mission, Values, Reputation, Brand Image**

What is the purpose of a company? Why it needs to be more than just 'maximisation of medium term shareholder value'. Issues of motivation. What does a company stand for? The business and moral value of a good reputation. How this links to a company's brand images, its marketing and public relations.

### **2. Ethical/responsible Decision-making**

An ethical approach to doing business; doing the right thing. Ethical reasoning principles e.g. rights theory, utilitarianism, cultural relativism and discourse ethics. How to deal with issues of bribery and corruption, gender and other forms of discrimination, conflicts of interest, rights dilemmas, etc.

### **3. Value Chain, Legal & Moral Complicity, Sphere of Influence**

What is the extent of a company's responsibility? What is its effective sphere of influence? What is its responsibility over both sourcing issues and product use and misuse? Increasing expectations on 'the name in the chain' to 'manage' the environmental and human rights performance of smaller companies in the chain.

### **4. Stakeholder Management (value added & reduced)**

Companies both create and destroy value. Some of the value created and much of the value destroyed is often external to the company and not part of traditional accounting processes. Recognition of and engagement with stakeholders, beyond simply shareholders and employees, is a key CSR process. Why partnerships matter and how to build them. Is a company's recognition of external costs and benefits a zero sum or potentially a win-win game?

### **5. Environment, Health and Well-being**

Environment is now the dominant sustainability issue. What does corporate environmentalism mean in practice? There are well-established business principles and practices for health and safety but they are often neglected. To what extent is the well-being of employees, contractors and local communities taken into account? What is acceptable risk? What timescales are involved? Following an accident do you blame the operator or the management system?

### **6. Social Impact, Labour Issues, Human Rights**

Labour issues have long been part of management education but they are increasingly seen in the wider context of human rights and the impact companies



have on local communities and society in general. What is a company's impact on and responsibility for poverty alleviation, non-discrimination, freedom from slavery, torture, etc.? How to deal with dilemmas on the ground. This connects closely with the concepts of sustainability, stakeholder engagement, sphere of influence, complicity and governance.

### **7. National and International Public Policy Engagement**

This is the ultimate stage of CSR engagement by a company. A company's approach to CSR tends to start with 'philanthropy', then defensive reputation protection, followed by a more offensive approach aimed at greater public recognition. Increasingly large companies are thrust into a fourth stage of acting as a development agent, ameliorating government failure. This has led some leading companies to recognise their role in, and seek to manage more pro-actively, their engagement with public policy issues.

### **8. Governance, Management, Accountability, Reporting**

How companies manage and account for their ethical, social and environmental performance internally and externally. National and global hard and soft governance processes. How market forces are reacting. The 'governance deficit' and the role of civil society and NGOs. Voluntarism versus compulsion. Carrots and sticks. The de facto role of companies in the governance of public policy issues.

### **Application of CSR to Mainstream MBA Modules**

The subject matter and issues outlined above are unlikely to come as a surprise to most of those involved in MBA teaching. The surprise is more likely to be that this is what CSR in the 21st century is all about. Many would probably claim to include coverage of some aspects of the above in existing teaching programmes, albeit without putting a specific CSR label on them. A thorough review of any set of MBA core teaching modules is likely to reveal coverage of a wide range of CSR issues, or at least the opportunity to include them. For instance, one would expect that courses in Supply Chain Management, Human Resource Management and Accountancy would cover much of the content of sections 3, 6 and 8 above respectively. Aspects of the others may be included in other courses but it is likely that this coverage is not as comprehensive or coherent as it could be if more deliberate planning and specialist input were applied.

Part of the problem, of course, is that some fundamental CSR principles tend to challenge traditional business theory and teaching. For example:

1. There is more to the purpose of the firm than simply maximising shareholder value.
2. The 'Triple Bottom Line' concept.
3. The stakeholder view of the firm.
4. Responsible decision-making requires a basic understanding of ethical principles.
5. Creating sustainable companies within a sustainable environment.
6. Companies' duty to respect human rights.
7. Companies' role in national and international public policy issues.

What follows is a summary of the main CSR applications to the most commonly taught core MBA modules. Can traditional MBA teaching faculty realistically be expected to assimilate these ideas into their courses?

**Strategic Management** implicitly covers most CSR issues. In particular, it should include the increasing need for companies to analyse the evolving social and ecological environment of their operations and to build into their strategic thinking their involvement in national and international public policy issues concerning the environment and human rights. Companies increasingly find themselves in de facto governance positions over such issues, and how they respond and/or actively engage is a key strategic decision. What is the strategic value of a company's reputation? Should reputation management be a 'reserved power' of the corporate HQ? How are intangible assets identified, measured and managed? How are these related to financial assets? When considering strategy in a dynamic environment, is account of the changing environmental and social context of business and of increasing expectations of more active CSR by companies, for instance, involvement in public policy issues concerning the environment and human rights? How are values, ethics, environmental & social factors brought into global strategic thinking? When operating in areas of weak governance, to what extent is the company acting as a development agent, ameliorating government failure, or even actively engaging in partnership with others as a global problem-solver? What business opportunities are presented by addressing bottom-of-the-pyramid issues?

**Marketing** courses tend to focus almost exclusively on customers. Is there a danger of not taking a wider view, particularly regarding exploring the connections between marketing, brand image, corporate reputation, mission and values? What risks does a company face if its marketers ignore the social impact of global brands, advertising and potentially creating unsustainable demand? How does marketing relate to creating stakeholder value more broadly? Can the perspective of creating superior customer value embrace the idea of creating superior stakeholder value? How might a company's environmental and social impact affect customer perceptions? Do marketing assets include positive stakeholder relationships? The 'No Logo' debate. Are opportunities of market segmentation to enable the marketing of basic products and services for poor countries and poorer sectors of richer countries included in marketing discussions?

**Human Resource Management** is all about people. Companies, as described in the film 'The Corporation' may be 'pathological externalisers'; people are not. Companies are run by people. People have consciences, self-esteem, peer groups, family and friendship pressures. They have a range of motivations and values, which if surveys and opinion polls show anything, are increasingly inclined towards wanting the company they work for to be socially responsible. Company leadership needs to understand and work with these trends to attract and retain the best talent. HRM modules, as said above, already include responsible management of labour issues. Some also include introduction to basic ethical reasoning principles, such as relativism, absolutism and utilitarianism, as a background to understanding the reasoning used in making decisions. All managers need to develop methodical decision making processes when facing ethical dilemmas, so that they can justify their decisions to everyone concerned, including to themselves, as opposed to making quick judgements and justifying them afterwards. Such decisions include issues of discrimination and valuing diversity, freedom of association, and bribery and corruption. They also include establishing corporate values and standards and deciding which ones must apply to all parts of a global company and which ones can vary according to local customs and practices. Such issues are of growing importance as the globalisation of business increases.

**Accounting and Financial Management** students need to understand the relationship between financial and non-financial management issues. A key issue is how to balance traditional approaches to return on capital employed and discounted cash flow with the increasing need to take account of unpaid for and unmeasured social and environmental capital and value flows and long-term sustainability. Is the value a company creates just for shareholders or for all stakeholders and how should this be measured and managed? As society's expectations of company 'triple bottom line' performance grows, there is increasing need to develop internal and external accounting mechanisms for non-financial performance and to consider their respective synergies and trade-offs with financial performance. What are the implications for society of business focus on return on capital employed, where this ignores use of environmental and social capital and the flows of benefits from them? There is increasing reference in annual reports and accounts to environmental and social impact and performance and links to subsidiary reports and websites. What cost saving and revenue generating opportunities might arise from companies having to account for these aspects of their performance? How do you value intangibles? Can you only manage what you can measure? Should not liabilities include social and environmental costs the company is imposing on society and may in future feel obliged or be required to pay for? These considerations have additional relevance to acquisition policy and also to international finance involving institutions like the World Bank, IFC, and national Export Credit Guarantee agencies, which increasingly have conditions relating to environmental and human rights issues. Limitations of discounted cash flow techniques regarding the sustainability agenda. Does 'goodwill' include the CSR business case concept of 'licence to operate'? If a company outsources part of its operations, does it also outsource its environmental footprint and social responsibilities? Companies need to be accountable to all their stakeholders and accounting courses need to cover ways in which this might be managed and how companies might be persuaded to do it better.

**Economics** courses touch on every aspect of the purpose and contribution of business. Economics is the study of how scarce resources can be used most efficiently to provide for our needs and wants. As more and more of the world's resources, including water and the air we breathe, become scarce and basic needs are not adequately provided for, the environmental and social aspects of economic decision-making will affect firms increasingly. Issues of sustainability and globalisation are central to economics and CSR. Growth of gross national product does not equate with growth of gross national happiness (GNH), let alone GNH sustainability. Global competitiveness imperatives have restricted the capacity of national governments to use fiscal policy and deficit financing to address domestic social issues. Management students need to understand how these issues are, or are not, being adequately addressed in the global economic system and the implications for business strategy and decision-making, especially for large companies.

Some examples: 'Demand' is a want that can be paid for. CSR issues arise particularly when governments fail to provide for (a) those unable to pay for basics, (b) collective demand for public goods & services and (c) regulation of socially harmful goods & services. Supply costs need to include external environmental and social costs. Internal economies of scale may at the expense of external social diseconomies of scale. Is the profit maximising behavioural assumption, made by economists for modelling purposes, (a) correct in fact, (b) desirable? How does shareholder value maximising behaviour relate to the stakeholder view of the firm? Imperfect competition models provide a good opportunity to show why the market needs governance, e.g. most better-governed states have strong anti-trust laws. CSR issues arise especially where



there is weak governance of aspects of market failure. Clever use of price discrimination and product differentiation can help provide essential products & services to the poor, especially in poor countries.

**Operations Management** is often very technical and short term focussed but it is the essence of a company's delivery of value. Core to CSR thinking is how to make the vision of a sustainable future sufficiently tangible to ensure the involvement of those who have the technical expertise to make it happen. This includes important environment, health and well-being issues. How might the concept of 'total responsibility management' equate with 'total quality management'? How can stakeholder health, safety, well-being and environmental issues be made key components of operational strategy, process design and layout, and innovation? What commercial opportunities arise from such innovative ideas?

**Project Management** should include stakeholder analysis and engagement, environmental and social pre-investment and ongoing risk analysis and management techniques. Does progress tracking include tracking stakeholder satisfaction? These are increasingly important in project management, especially in areas of weak governance.

**Supply Chain Management** provides the core context for examining a company's degree of influence over its whole value chain and its legal and moral complicity in the environmental and social issues arising at any point in the chain, for example sustainable development, child labour, treatment of women, fair wages, etc. The changed business and social environment has led to greater complexity across supply chains. What is the responsibility of the 'name in the chain' or of the most powerful companies for the environmental and social performance of others in the supply chain. What is a company's responsibility for how its products are used or misused and their ultimate disposal or recycling? Given increased stakeholder expectations of such companies, how can these best be managed and performance accounted for?

**Organisational Behaviour** provides an ideal opportunity to relate students' personal values to the purpose of their work/life, the organisations they will lead and manage in the future and the extent to which they will embrace CSR business strategies. This teaching needs to relate closely to that discussed under Human Resource Management above. The course needs to include cultural differences between profit, not-for-profit and government sector organisations and how they often have different world views, speak different languages, etc. This is critical to students' preparation for future stakeholder engagement roles in whichever sector they may work in the future. There are many other parts of OB courses, which relate closely to managing CSR issues, such as implications of unconscious attitudes and behaviour, personal power versus positional power and values driven leadership. For instance, what attitudes do students have towards campaigning NGOs, their legitimacy and responsibility? The importance of understanding the power that you have to influence company decisions and practice, e.g. on equal opportunities, and the power that companies have to influence wider societal agendas. The need for managers to be true to themselves and their values, and to resist the de-individualisation process that some organisations encourage.

**Business Law.** While 'hard law' may restrict companies' legal responsibilities primarily to serving shareholder interests, students should also be aware of evolving 'soft law' relating to the interests of other stakeholders and public expectations arising from it. Are directors agents of shareholders only or all main stakeholders? What is the legal position in the UK, EU, USA & elsewhere?

How does this fit with evolving 'soft law' expectations of directors' duties? International law, especially concerning human rights, should also be covered. Recent tort cases, both in the USA and UK, have considerable implications for companies accused of committing human rights abuses in third world countries. Students need to explore the issues of complicity, sphere of influence and the precautionary principle. What are the legal implications for companies responding to pressure from NGOs and others to be more transparent regarding their social and environmental impacts? In an era of global governance deficit and many weak or failing states, corporate governance, de facto if not de jure, takes on responsibility for engagement with public policy governance issues, such as environment and human rights. What level of engagement in these issues is it reasonable to expect of companies? What is the role of voluntary codes and principles such as the UN's Global Compact and the Global Reporting Initiative?

### **Teaching CSR across the MBA Curriculum?**

If it is the case that, say, up to half of the above is at least touched on in existing core MBA modules and that much of the remaining half is increasingly being recognised as important to the preparation of future business leaders, then it should be possible to make a convincing case for adapting existing modules to embrace the full spectrum of CSR concepts and issues. As with leading companies, business faculties would need to recruit CSR expertise. But again following the lead of these companies, a major part of the job of CSR specialists would be to advise and assist other faculty to include relevant CSR material in their courses.

They should work through each MBA module with the teaching faculty concerned to negotiate the relevant CSR application. If non-CSR faculty members are nervous about teaching the new material, the CSR specialists could offer to team teach in the first instance and/or make inputs to relevant teaching sessions. It would also be the job of the CSR specialist to avoid unnecessary duplication and to ensure that the sum of the 'CSR parts' taught in this way added up to a comprehensive whole.. In order that students, and indeed faculty, understood that this was the way CSR teaching was being approached, it would be necessary for detailed explanation to be given in the MBA course literature and, probably, for the CSR specialist to have some core time with the whole MBA cohort to provide the overall CSR framework in which they could fit the pieces as they were covered in their various core modules. There would always be a case for offering a specialist elective for those students who wanted to delve more deeply into CSR theory and practice. The question remains, however, as to whether the cross curriculum approach could ever be a sufficient way of covering CSR for the practical needs of most MBA students as future business managers and leaders, or whether specific CSR inputs, taught by specialists, are necessary. Many CSR specialists would probably argue that so much fundamental CSR thinking is outside the box of traditional business thinking that it is unlikely ever to be adequately taught by a traditional business faculty.

They would perhaps argue that traditional business thinking might well cover the so-called 'business case' for CSR but could not reasonably be expected adequately to embrace other rationalities such as non-economic arguments and moral issues. Much MBA teaching is geared to understanding how companies can deliver good performance within market constraints and deliver high value to shareholders. CSR teaching stresses that companies are also social constructs with responsibilities to other stakeholders and society as a whole. This requires a new approach to management regarding identifying and opening up discourse

with relevant stakeholders, making decisions that achieve the optimum balance between delivering operational efficiency and meeting reasonable societal expectations. It requires managers to understand that stakeholder engagement is not simply an extension of risk management but a matter of learning the different languages and perspectives of the non-business sectors and embracing wider meanings of 'value-added'. The management and measurement of CSR performance also require specialist knowledge and input, especially as globalisation and value chain issues lead more and more companies into the uncharted waters of active engagement with public policy issues and governance. This suggests the need for a full CSR module within the core MBA curriculum, which may well be what most business schools and university departments have to resort to in the short term.

One pragmatic approach might be to run a parallel full CSR module that fitted in closely with the timetable of other subject teaching. This would involve, say, a 10 hour introductory course, which covered the seven core principles of CSR outlined above. The remaining 20 hours would be taught by CSR specialists in 2/3 hour segments, timetabled to follow immediately on from each of the other core courses. In this case, there would be a CSR session covering many of the points raised above on each of strategic management, marketing, human resource management and so on. How much better it would be, however, if these sessions could be integrated into the 'traditional' courses themselves.

If the case for including these ideas within the core MBA curriculum is strong enough, it ought eventually to be possible to infuse them into mainstream core MBA modules. This would require an act of will on the part of the whole business faculty. All members of faculty would need to understand and embrace modern CSR thinking as described in this paper. It would need to be an explicitly stated part of the ethos of the MBA programme. This is the author's vision. It clearly cannot be achieved overnight. Nevertheless, if the rationale for equipping our future business leaders with the understanding, sensitivities and skills needed to apply an CSR approach to business strategy and practice is as strong as many now assert, then it needs to be done as quickly as possible. Given the act of will on the part of the MBA teaching faculty leadership, what is required is a collective understanding of the whole MBA student experience and the learning outcomes that are being aimed at. Subject tutors need to understand what each subject, not just their own, contributes to this and how the whole learning outcome should be greater than the sum of the parts. Given such an ethos, and given an acceptance that CSR concepts and skills are an essential part of that final learning outcome, the rest should follow. Namely, that subject tutors would be willing to learn where CSR aspects fit within their modules and how these can best be introduced. Additionally they should agree to sufficient space within the core being given to enable the specialist CSR team to introduce the fundamental CSR thinking outlined above and prepare students for where they can apply these ideas in the other mainstream courses.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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